

BOOKMARKS

Field of the Invention:

The present invention relates to bookmarks, and more particularly, the present invention relates to bookmarks with indicia thereon.

Background of the Invention:

Most modern books have relatively rigid covers and backs. This is true of even paperback books in which the covers are generally stiffer than the pages. Bookmarks in the form of elastic bands have evolved because the typical bookmark can slip out of a book while elastic bands remain in place. However, elastic band bookmarks have not achieved a wide degree of public acceptance even though they enable a reader to more securely mark a page of a book.

In view of the aforementioned considerations, there is a need for bookmarks employing endless elastic bands which achieve a greater degree of public acceptance.

Summary of the Invention:

The present invention is directed to a bookmark comprising a flat, seamless elastic band configured as a loop, the loop having a relaxed diameter less than the height of the book and being elastically expandable to a diameter greater than the height of the book so that the elastic band encompasses a front or back cover of the book and a selected number of pages when expanded with a portion of it's length disposed within the book. The band has a display element

slidably disposed thereon which has an outwardly facing surface including display substrate. A selected display panel having a first side with an image thereon and a second side with adhesive thereon is the mounted on the display substrate.

In a further aspect of the invention, a pair of wings extend laterally from the display substrate, the wings having flanges that form a tube around the band to enclose the band.

In still a further aspect of the invention, the flanges each have side edges that are opposed in spaced relation to one another to define gaps therebetween, wherein the elastic band is insertable edgewise through the gaps to secure the elastic band to a slider.

In still a further aspect of the invention, the display substrate is circular and the selected display panel is circular.

Brief Description of the Drawings

Various other features and attendant advantages of the present invention will be more fully appreciated as the same becomes better understood when considered in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, in which like reference characters designate the same or similar parts throughout the several views, and wherein:

Fig.1 is a perspective view of a bookmark, configured in accordance with the present invention, shown marking a page in a book;

Fig. 2 is a perspective view of the bookmark used in Fig. 1, but detached from the book and showing an imaged sticker detached from the bookmark, the sticker having an imaged face and an adhesive face (shown in dotted lines);

Fig. 3 is a view similar to Fig. 2 but showing the inside surface of the elastic band and a rear surface of the slider;

Fig. 4 is a side view of the slider and a portion of the elastic band shown in dotted lines;

Fig. 5 is a view of the slider detached from the elastic band, and

Fig. 6 is a view of a kit including components of the present invention.

Detailed Description:

Referring now to Fig. 1 there is shown a book 10 having a relatively stiff front cover 12 and a relatively stiff back cover 14 between which are disposed relatively flexible pages 16 that are attached to one another along a binding 18. A bookmark 20, configured in accordance with the principles of the present invention, is used to separate a first group of pages 16a from a second group of pages 16b in order to readily identify one or two pages of interest facing a gap 21 between the groups of pages.

The bookmark 20 is comprised of an elastic band 24 which is both seamless and flat, having a width "W" substantially greater than its thickness "T." The seamless elastic band 24 has a relaxed length shown in Figs. 2 and 3 that is less than its expanded length shown in Fig. 1. In Fig. 1 the elastic band 24 is stretched to extend over the book cover 12 and through the gap 21 between the groups of pages 16a and 16b. The stretched elastic band 24

frictionally engages the cover 12 of the book, the top and bottom edges of the cover and the pages facing one another in the gap 21 so as to be securely mounted on the book 10. When the book 10 is opened, the bookmark 20 remains in place until affirmatively removed by the person handling the book and does not drop out, as is the case with conventional bookmarks.

As is seen in Fig. 1 - 3, a slider 30, preferably made of metal, is mounted on the elastic band 24. The slider 30 has indicia 32 thereon, which indicia can be any selective image and may include, for example, written information and/or a pictorial image. When the elastic band 24 is stretched as in Fig. 1, the slider 30 is readily slid along the elastic band. This is because when the elastic band 24 is stretched, its width W and thickness T are reduced. There are however sufficient frictional forces between the elastic band 24, slider 30 and surface 31 of the book cover 12 to keep the slider 30 positioned in a selected position on the book cover until the slider is pushed either toward the top edge 33 or bottom edge 34 of the cover.

As is seen in Fig. 2, the slider 30 has an image support area 38 on which the image 32 is placed. In accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention, the image 32 is in the form of a sticker 40 which has a front side 42 bearing the image 32. The image 32 is preferably covered with a transparent plastic layer 43 which preferably has the diameter of the front side 42 of the sticker 40. The sticker 40 has a rear side 44 which is coated with adhesive 45. The adhesive 45 on rear side 44 adheres to the surface of the image support area 38 of the slider 30. Preferably, the adhesive 45 is a permanent adhesive so that the sticker 40 is difficult to remove. Alternatively,

the adhesive is placed on the image support area 38 of the slider 30. In order to center the sticker 40, there is a rim 46 surrounding the image support area 38, within which rim the sticker 40 is positioned. While it is preferable that the support area 38 is circular as illustrated in each of the figures, the support area 38 in other embodiments may have other shapes such as square, rectangular, oval or any shape compatible with the principles of this invention. The sticker 40 may also have shapes other than circular.

The slider 30 has first and second wings 50 and 52, respectively, which extend laterally from the image support area 38. As is seen in Figs. 3-5, the wing 50 has a pair of flanges 54 and 56 which are folded over to form a tubular portion 58 with a rectangular cross section. The tubular portion 58 has a depth defined by side walls 60 and 62 of the wing 50 which extend transverse, and preferably normal to a front wall 61 (Fig. 2) of the wing 50.

The second wing 52 has a pair of flanges 70 and 72 which as seen in Fig. 3 are folded over to form a tube 74 with a rectangular cross section. The tube 74 has a width defined by side walls 76 and 78 which extend transverse and preferably normal to a front wall 80 (Fig. 2) of the wing 52.

As is seen in Fig. 3, the flanges 54 and 56 on the tube 58 are separated by a gap 84 and the flanges 70 and 72 of the tube 74 are separated by a gap 86. The gaps 84 and 86 are both slightly narrower than the thickness T of the elastic band 24, while the distance between the side walls 60 and 62 of the tube 58 and side walls 76 and 78 of the tube 74 are preferably slightly less than the width W of the elastic band 24. Consequently, until the elastic band 24 is stretched so as to decrease both its width W and thickness T , the slider 30 is frictionally held

relatively tightly in place on the elastic band. As has been previously discussed, when the elastic band 24 is stretched it becomes both narrower and thinner thus allowing the slider 30 to more readily slide along the elastic band 24. As is apparent in Fig. 3, the elastic band 24 has portion 24a which is disposed adjacent to the back surface 38a of the image display area 38. The portion 24a is frictionally engageable with the outer surface 31 of the book cover 12 (see Fig. 1).

In order to make it easier to insert the band 24 through the slots 84 and 86 in the tubes 58 and 74, the flanges 54 and 56 and the flanges 70 and 72 each have curved corners 90 so that the corners of the flanges do not bite into the surface of the elastic band 24 as the slider 30 is slid thereon. In addition, the curved corners 90 facilitate insertion of the elastic band 24 through the slots 84 and 86, again because the curved corners 90 do not bite into the elastic band.

Preferably, the image support area 38 has a circular indentation 100 therein defined by an inwardly facing ridge 102 extending to the rim 46. The rim 46 has a front surface 104 which is flush with front surfaces 106 and 108 of the wings 50 and 52, respectively.

Referring now to Fig. 6, there is shown a kit 120 comprising the elastic band 24, three sliders 30, 30' and 30" and a sticker 40. The slider 30' has no sticker attached, and the slider 30" is shown from the back. The sticker 40' is shown as a medallion separate from the slider. These components when assembled provide customized bookmarks 20 (Fig. 1) wherein the retail customer or the retailer can select many different images 32 and different elastic bands of different colors and designs. While only one elastic band 24, one

separate sticker and three sliders 30, 30' and 30" are shown, the kit 120 preferably comprises numerous elastic bands, stickers and sliders.

From the foregoing description, one skilled in the art can easily ascertain the essential characteristics of this invention, and without departing from the spirit and scope thereof, can make various changes and modifications of the invention to adapt it to various usages and conditions.